



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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January 22, 2025

By ECF

Hon. Valerie Caproni
United States District Court
Southern District of New York
40 Foley Square
New York, NY 10007

Re: *American Civil Liberties Union Foundation v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, No. 24 Civ. 7183 (VEC)

Dear Judge Caproni:

This Office represents Defendant U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) in the above-referenced action. Plaintiff American Civil Liberties Union Foundation (“ACLU”) brings suit pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 (“FOIA”). The parties respectfully submit a joint status update, in accordance with the Court’s order of November 14, 2024, ECF No. 22.

On November 14, 2024, ICE made its first production to Plaintiff of responsive and non-exempt records, which included records responsive to Part 2 of Plaintiff’s first FOIA request. Specifically, in connection with the November release, ICE processed 442 pages of potentially responsive records. Of these 442 pages, ICE produced 222 pages to Plaintiff, which were withheld in part pursuant to FOIA Exemptions (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), and (b)(7)(E); determined that 107 pages were duplicates; and sent 74 pages to a third party for a submitter’s notice pursuant to 6 C.F.R. § 5.7. On December 10, 2024, ICE produced 12 pages of these 74 pages to Plaintiff, withheld in part pursuant to FOIA Exemptions (b)(6) and (b)(7)(E). ICE also withheld 62 of these 74 pages in full pursuant to Exemptions (b)(3)(A) and (b)(4). ICE has based its (b)(3)(A) exemption on 41 U.S.C. § 423(a)(1). Additionally, 39 pages were referred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a direct response to Plaintiff in November, which Plaintiff has since received.

On December 10, 2024, ICE made its second production to Plaintiff of responsive and non-exempt records. In connection with the December release, ICE processed 380 pages of potentially responsive records, which included records from a search of custodian William Burger for responses to RFI Notice ID Number 2024ICEMULTISTATE and records from a search of custodian John Cappello for responses to RFI Notice ID Number ICEMULTISTATE01. Of the 380 processed pages, ICE produced 23 pages to Plaintiff, which were withheld in part pursuant to FOIA Exemptions (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), and (b)(7)(E);

determined that 98 pages were duplicates and 6 pages were non-responsive; and sent 253 pages to third parties for a submitter's notice pursuant to 6 C.F.R. § 5.7.

On January 15, 2025, ICE made its third production to Plaintiff of responsive, non-exempt portions of the 253 pages it received back from third parties. With the January 15 production, ICE has now completed processing and production of all responsive, non-exempt records.

On January 17, 2025, Plaintiff sent a letter to counsel for ICE requesting further information about ICE's productions. Plaintiff questioned the legal basis of some of ICE's withholdings, and inquired whether ICE would release the redacted information. Plaintiff also requested production of a *Vaughn* Index, if summary judgment was necessary. ICE has not yet had an opportunity to respond to Plaintiff's letter, but will do so by January 31, 2025. By February 7, 2025, the parties will confer about whether they can resolve the case or will proceed to summary judgment, and will provide a further status update with a proposed schedule, if necessary, to the Court on or before February 21, 2025.

We thank the Court for its consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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